

# Quickstart Guide for eXe

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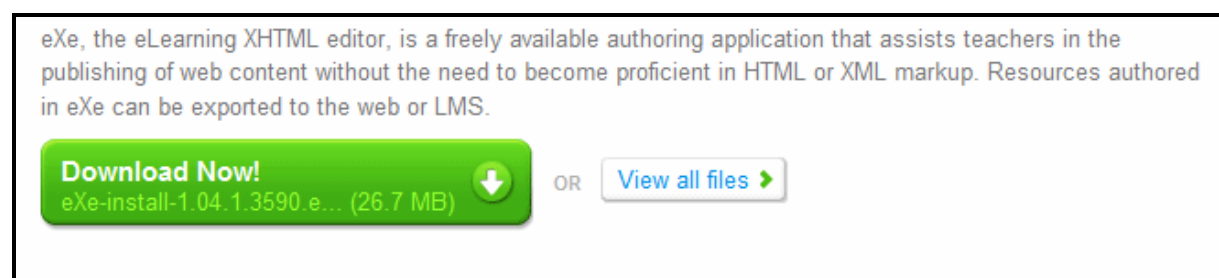
This Quickstart Guide covers how to:

- Download eXe to a computer.
- Create and edit learning content and activities with eXe.
- Export content to Moodle.

## 1. About eXe

eXe is a freely available Open Source application for designing and publishing web-based teaching and learning materials. This easy to use authoring tool enables teachers to organise content and activities into interesting, engaging and learner-centred online learning resources.

eXe can be downloaded from: <http://sourceforge.net/projects/exe/> . The download page looks like this:



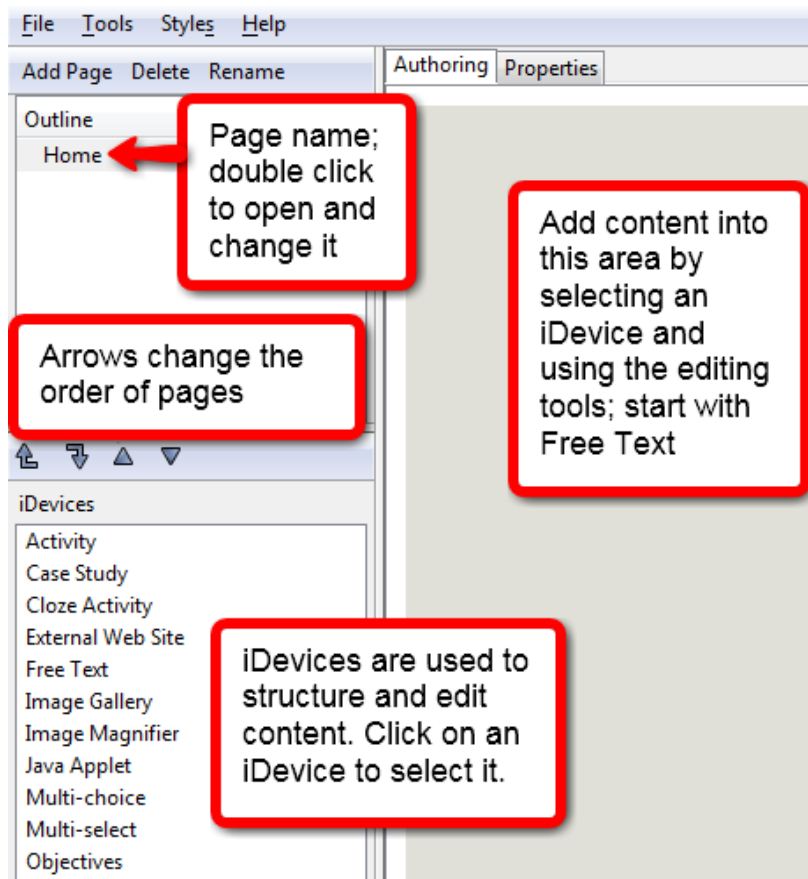
Click on the Download button and follow the instructions to install it on your computer. It will take about 10 -12 minutes to download.

### Useful resources for learning about eXe:

- Within eXe there is an eXe tutorial under the Help menu.
- [eXe Online manual](#)
- Refer to the guidelines and tips provided in the OP Moodle Staff Resources book called **Guide to file formats for Moodle resources**

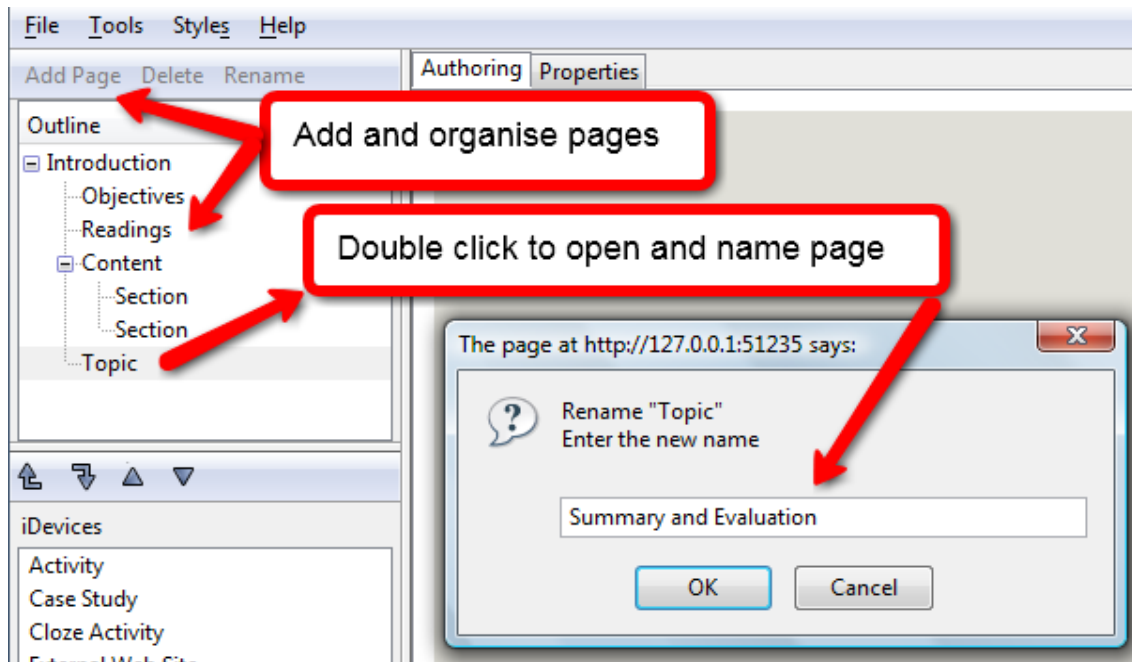
## 2. Open eXe

When you open the eXe programme it looks like this. It contains an **Outline** area for adding and organising pages, a group of tools called **iDevices** for presenting and structuring content, and an **Authoring** window where content is added and edited.



## 3. Add and organise pages

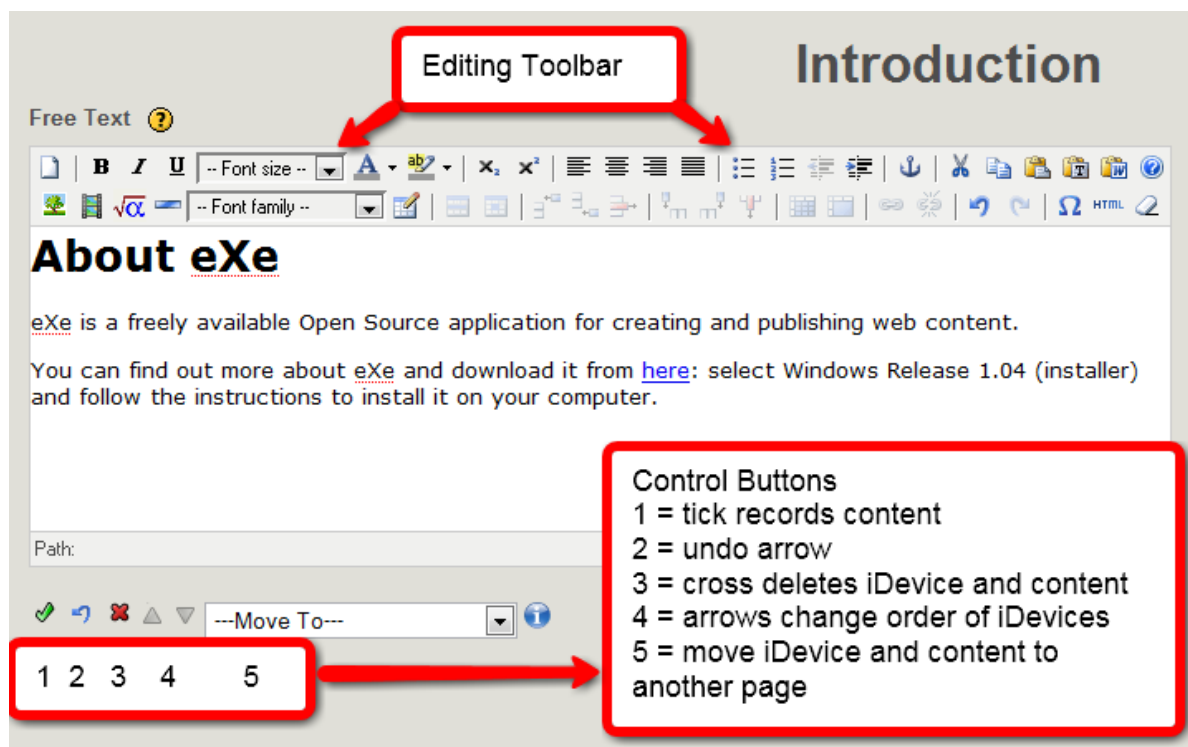
Add one or more pages in the **Outline** area by clicking the **Add Page** button. When a page is selected you can rename it using the Rename button or by double clicking on the page.



#### 4. Free Text iDevice

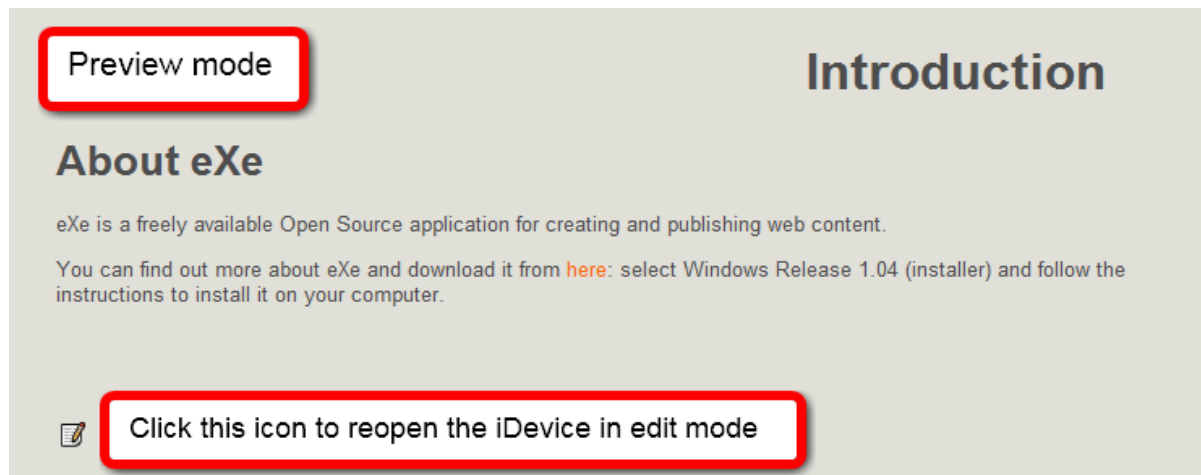
This tool is used for adding text, images, and embedding media eg sound files, flashfiles.

Select a page to add content to. Open the **Free Text iDevice**. This is what it looks like in **edit mode** with some text added.



Clicking the green tick control button records the content and switches the view to **preview mode**. (Beware this does not save your work; to save your work click on the **File** Menu and select **Save As ...** It will be saved as an **eXe package file (.elp file)** which you can return to later).

This is what it looks like in preview mode.

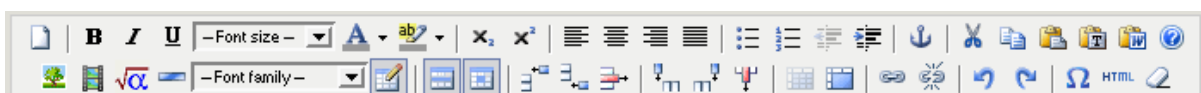


## Deleting iDevices


To delete the Free Text iDevice and its contents, or any other iDevice, simply click on the red cross control button.

## 4A. Adding content


In most of the iDevices content is entered and formatted using the editing toolbar. Many of these editing tools will be familiar from Word documents.



These tools may be less familiar:

 Anchor: inserts an anchor for internal linking (via the chain text-link button); only supported in exports of type Web Site

 Paste clipboard as text, and Paste from Word (cleans up some Word formatting but not all)

 Image: insert an image into your content (to link to a URL or to embed a file); or edit its properties



Media: insert a media clip into your content (to link to a URL or to embed a file); or edit its properties



Text Link: insert a link (to an external URL, an internal anchor, or to embed an attachment file); or edit its properties; or remove the link (via the broken-chain button)



HTML raw source editor (advanced users only)

## Text

1. Open the **Free Text iDevice**.
2. Copy and paste text from a Word document into the text window (refer to Tips below to avoid problems with this), or type directly into the text window.

### Tips:

Copying and pasting text directly from Word documents and other formatted sources may cause some problems when you export and upload the eXe learning package, for example html code will suddenly be present around your text especially bullet points although it wasn't obvious in the working eXe package (.elp file). To avoid this problem paste text into **Notepad** first to remove most of the formatting (copy from Word, open **Notepad** from your Program list under **Accessories**, paste text, remove bullet points and other obvious formatting remaining in the text, select all the text and copy, then paste into the eXe text box, reformat and Insert).

The default font is very small and not very readable on screen. A font such as Ariel font size 3 (12pt) is much more reader-friendly.

Avoid filling the pages with loads of text that readers have to scroll through. If you have a large amount of reading text, it would be better to provide it as an attached pdf file.

Take care with your spelling as there is no spell-check provided in eXe.

## 4B. Links and attachments

When a document is attached, eXe takes a copy of it and saves it as part of the eXe package. Linking out to a website takes you directly to the website but does not take a copy of the website.

Add hyperlinks and attachments using the **text link and unlink editor buttons** (chain buttons in Editing Toolbar).

1. Highlight and select the text word or short phrase which will become the link source.
2. Open the link editor and specify the web URL for a web link or click on the browser button to choose a local file document to attach.
3. Select Open in new window from the **Target** drop-down menu. Click Insert.
4. Click the green tick control button to switch to **preview mode**.

#### **Tips:**

Check the attached document is easy to read on screen; if students need to print it off provide it as a pdf.

## **4C. Images**

eXe allows you to include .jpg, .gif and .png image files into your content.

Insert images using the **image editor button** (tree icon in Editing Toolbar); note that images cannot be copied and pasted from word documents.

1. Open the image editor and specify the web URL or click on the browser button to choose a local image file. (The image URL must include the image file-type eg .jpg)
2. If needed, specify the dimensions and alignment around text (click the Appearance tab).
3. Click Insert. Adjust the image size to fit.
4. Click the green tick control button to switch to **preview mode**.

To modify an image once it has been added into the content, click the **pencil editing button** at the bottom left to switch to edit mode. Select the image by clicking on it: click the **image editor button** or right-click to see the image menu and open **Image Properties** to return to the image editor.

### Tips:

Check the KB size of local file-based images **before** inserting them into your eXe package to see whether they need to be resized. Hover your mouse over the image file to reveal its size; if it's larger than 100 KB it should be resized. Use MS Office Picture Manager to resize or compress your images. (See 'Resizing images using MS Office Picture Manager' in Moodle Resources (access at OP Moodle: Staff Resources)).

Check the copyright on images. [Flickr](#) has a huge collection of images with a creative commons licence which are freely available to use. Remember to attribute the source of your image.

## 4D. Sound files and Powerpoints

The best format for adding sound files to your eXe package is as MP3 files. (WAV and WMA sound files may not work and should be converted to MP3; see Tips below guidelines).

Powerpoints should be converted to Flash files (swf) before being inserted in to your content (see Tips below).

Insert sound files and flash files using the **media editor button** (filmstrip icon in Editing Toolbar).

1. Open the media editor and select the appropriate option from the **Type** drop-down menu: for example MP3 for sound files, ShockWave Flash SWF for previously converted powerpoint presentations.
2. Specify the web URL or click on the browser button to choose a local file. Click Insert. A media object outline will appear.
3. Click the green tick control button to switch to **preview mode**.

To modify a media file once it has been added into the content, click the **pencil editing button** to switch to edit mode. Select the media object outline: click the media editor button or right-click to see the media object's menu.

### Tips:

You can use an application called Audacity to record sound files. Download Audacity from [here](#); you need both Audacity 1.2.6 and the LAME MP3 encoder from here. Guidelines for 'How to use Audacity' (including converting WAV to MP3) and 'How to convert WMA files into MP3' are provided in Moodle Resources (access at OP Moodle: Staff Resources).

Keep powerpoint presentations to a manageable size (say 15 slides). Once you have completed the Presentation (with sound attached if you are adding voice-over), it can be quickly and easily converted into Flash (.swf file) using [iSpring](#). Downloaded iSpring to your computer, reopen the powerpoint and the **iSpring Converter** should be present in your main menu. Click **Publish** from the iSpring menu bar. This will produce 3 files one of which is the .swf file (Shockwave flash). The .swf file can now be added to your content. (See 'How to turn your Powerpoint into Flash using iSpring' in Moodle Resources (access at OP Moodle: Staff Resources)).

## YouTube videos

Insert YouTube videos using the **media editor button**.

1. Copy the URL for the video clip. Open the media editor and paste the URL into the File/URL field and press [ENTER].
2. The ShockWave Flash SWF will be automatically selected and the video will preview within the media window. Click Insert.
3. A media object outline will appear. Click the green tick control button to switch to **preview mode**. Modify as for other media.

## Other iDevices

There are a number of other iDevices that can be used to present content and activities and provide learner guidance, for example objectives, case study, reading activity, reflection and question types.

You can construct your own iDevices using the Tools menu in eXe and open the iDevice Editor.

## Saving

When you have finished entering content, clicking the tick control button switches to preview mode. This does not save your work; to save your work click on the **File** Menu and select **Save As ...** It will be saved as an **eXe package file (.elp file)** which you can return to later.

To close an eXe file click on the **File** menu and select **Quit**.



## Merging: inserting and extracting

In the **File** menu the **Merging** option allows you to take an elp file and merge the content of that file into another elp file, or to take a page from an elp file and extract it to create a new elp.

Open the .elp file you will be adding the new material into, select the node ("page" in your file) you wish to insert the content into, then select **Merge -> Insert Package** from the File menu. (Alternately, you can right-click on a node and select **Insert Package**). The Browser dialogue is displayed. Browse to the .elp file you want to insert and click **Open**. The new file content will now appear in your open .elp file. This adds the entire .elp file, which you can reconstruct by editing/deleting pages as needed.

To extract a node (pages and all the pages sitting beneath it), select the node from your open .elp file, select **File, Merging, Extract Package** (or right-click). A save dialog is displayed. Enter a file name for the node you are extracting and click **Save**. A confirmation message will be displayed.

## Exporting, Printing

### Exporting and uploading to Moodle

To export, click on the **File** menu and select **Export -> IMS Content Package**. In Moodle, upload the package file to your course storage folder as normal. From the course page where the eXe package will be displayed, view the drop-down **resource menu** and select **Add an IMS content package**. Complete the editing page to link to the zipped eXe file; select the correct setting to open in a new window. Now click the **Save and display** button at the bottom of the page, then **Deploy** to enable the package to be accessed. The eXe package will now appear on your course page.

### Printable copies of eXe packages

There are two ways of providing a printable copy of an eXe package.

1. Open the .elp file and convert into a PDF version using the **File -> Print** menu. This produces pages as they appear in the eXe package.
2. Convert a Word document containing the most relevant parts of the eXe package into a PDF version.

If you require any assistance using eXe please contact EDC.

[EDC:VO:v3:May2010]